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121 171 433 241 Among the tribes of the region being studied, we noted the presence of small human groups of sylvicolists par excellence, that is hunters, more or less nomadic; they are the Maku. Whereas the other tribes are fluminicolists, that is, established on the banks of the important watercourses and given to fishing and agriculture. Although some Maku groups have assimilated many of the customs of the other tribes, we do not include them in these studies. We have already pointed out (I, Note 1) that the Maku are probably the most ancient inhabitants of the region.

The tribes that we studied are classified, then, in two large linguistic families:

101 121 1st. Tukano Family, covering the tribes: 1. Daxseá or Tukano; 2. Bará or Barasana; 3. Bá:re-masã or Temyú-tapuya (food people); 4. Doxká-foará or Tuyuka (clay people); 5. Edúrya or Erúlya; 6. Emõã-masã or Waríwa-tapuya (guariba people); 7. Hanẽra or Panẽnoá; 8. Íde-masã, Aõ-nĩra, Makuná or Yí-tapuya /80/ (water people); 9. Ihwana or Yona; 10. Koneá or Arapásu (woodpecker people); 11. Kótirya or Wanana; 12. Mõxtã or Karapanã-tapuya (daddy-longlegs people); 13. Neenõá or Miriti-tapuya (buriti people); 14. Oá-mahã or Mikura-tapuya (gambá people); 15. Pamíwa or Kubewana; 16. Páboa-maxsã or Tatu-tapuya (tatu people); 17. Roéra-masã or Taraíra-tapuya (taraíra people); 18. Surirá or Suryana; 19. Tsẽna; 20. Yebá-masã; 21. Wahyara, Waíana or Yuriti-tapuya (dove people); 22. Waí-khãna or Pirá-tapuya (fish people); 23. Winá or Desana.

2nd. Arwake Family, including the tribes: 1. Kumãdene or Ipeka-tapuya (water-duck people); 2. Talyáseri or Taryana. We speak only of these two, because the other tribes of this numerous family do not inhabit the Uaupés basin, and, indeed, that of the rivers Içana, Xié, and Negro.

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regarded themselves as the superior of all other Indians who were driven back into the headwaters (Giacone, 1949, p. 5).

Thus the movement of Colombian settlers down the Vaupés River had a markedly disturbing effect upon the Cubeo by dispossessing them from their ancestral river. The first-ranking sibs, however, did not leave their sites at the rapids from whence their ancestors are supposed to have emerged. But in staying on they succumbed most rapidly to the European influence.

Despite their strong orientation toward the river the Cubeo also make use of footpaths. Near the mouth of the Cuduiarí, for example, a trail leads to the Querarí. There are, in fact, many paths in the region that provide short cuts between rivers. Raiding parties come on foot to avoid detection, and paths are used for short journeys. The Cubeo Indian, however, is not, by preference, a walker.

## SIZE

The size of a clearing is variable, to a degree, depending upon the number of households and their ambitions for entertaining and for trade with the whites. A headman's household, which is always the most ambitious and is, therefore, the most productive, requires approximately two acres of manioc land for an annual yield of 400 baskets (50–60 pounds per basket). Most households among the *Bahúkiwa* averaged only 200 baskets of manioc a year and utilized accordingly a manioc garden of one acre. A sib center community of 12 households requires more than 12 acres for manioc cultivation as well as several acres more for the plaza and subsidiary cultivations, if the full burden of entertaining is left to one or two households, as is often the case. Satellite communities are often as small as three households and their clearings are proportionately smaller.

The Cubeo community is always small, rarely reaching a population beyond 16 households, a household in every case being limited to a nuclear family. The size of community seems to be a result of a complex series of adaptations of many elements to one another—architectural, ecological, sociological, and psychological. The architectural factor is that a community must be dominated by a single maloca. The largest maloca in the Northwest Amazon region is a 16-household dwelling with eight compartments ranged along each long wall. The smaller dwellings of the Independents can augment the size of a community. The fact is, however, that an Independent household has usually been formed for personal reasons, such as a quarrel with the headman, rather than for reasons of crowding.

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From *Kíwaĩ*, the culture hero, the people learned how to fish with hook and line and how to hunt with bow and arrow and with the blowgun. The Indians say that in ancient times they did not hunt the tapir. It was not until they acquired guns that they learned how to kill tapir. Other animals they did not eat because of religious taboos that are no longer in force. Paca and armadillo were devourers of human corpses and were hence forbidden; eating sloth would make people lazy; and finally, all animals whose names were represented in the sib genealogies were taboo to members of that sib.

## PRODUCTION

The Cubeo do not value abundance of food for its own sake. Plenty is, to be sure, widely enjoyed as a break in the daily routine. It is not valued for its promise of satiety, for the Indians customarily eat moderately, but for the opportunity it offers for a gay feast. A big catch of game or of fish excites the people because it does not occur often. There is no desire to overdo, however, and no more is brought than will be consumed directly or can be safely preserved by smoking and drying. Since, at best, smoking preserves meat for only a week or two in the tropical climate there is not much point in increasing a fisherman's or a hunter's "take." Social status is a minor issue in food production since feasting is essentially intrasib, whereas social status comes into play most sharply between sibs.

In short, there are no strong motives to stimulate hunting and fishing other than appetite and desire for variety. The pressure in production falls upon the women. If we are to speak of "surplus" at all in Cubeo food production it can be only in connection with the manioc crop, which is regarded as the woman's contribution, even though it is the men who make the clearing. The limiting factor in manioc production is not land as much as it is labor and morale. A large community under a forceful headman can clear a good deal more land than is needed for subsistence. In the case of manioc, subsistence can be measured precisely by the amount that is converted directly to manioc cake (*úuno*) and to tapioca porridge. "Surplus" is what is converted to chicha (*unkúndye*) and to farinha. There can be no doubt but that the machete, now universal in the region, improved the standard of nourishment considerably. The real limitation upon production is woman power. Since women carry through all phases of manioc production, from planting and harvesting to conversion into the final product, they are the ultimate "bottleneck." A woman working only to prepare manioc as food is already fully occupied.

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To produce farinha, which is mainly for trade, and chicha, which is mainly for sociability, she draws upon what is normally her "spare" time. She gives up the evening hours of rest, moments of gossip, play with her breast baby, and food foraging in the brush, which she regards as a pleasant diversion from the back-breaking manioc routine.

A Cubeo woman cannot be coerced to work any more than a man can be. Her willingness to work hard depends, in the case of a married woman, upon her regard for her husband in the first place, but also upon her general relations with the community at large. The Cubeo know that a lazy woman is a disaffected woman and they are conscious, accordingly, of the social importance of marital felicity. The only control the community has over a domestic situation is by maintaining a generally high level of good feeling. Needless to say, Cubeo women are not and do not consider themselves to be abused. A woman who does not care for her husband will leave him or, if her laziness is deep-seated and represents a grievance against the community as a whole, she will urge her husband to leave with her. The fact is, the feeling against indolence or apathy toward work is so strong that even a thick-skinned person can sense the unvoiced community disapproval. Thus, in the absence of strong political authority the productivity of a Cubeo community depends in the main upon all of the subtle factors of kinship, sexual attractiveness, and satisfaction, and of public morale. An unproductive community is normally not underprivileged by virtue of location or of tools but simply by its own lack of social health.

## FISHING

Fish are abundant and there is hardly a day when fish are not part of the diet. The basic Cubeo meal consists of manioc cake and fish. Every male, from puberty to the grave, is a fisherman. Fishing is the regular masculine routine. Most fishing is individual – a man sometimes accompanied by a young son in a small canoe fishing with hook and line, or a man (also accompanied by a young son) fishing in shallows with bow and arrow. An Indian fishes his own stretch of river at a preferred place. If a man wishes to join another at the same place there is no quarrel, since fishing is never competitive. There is some rivalrous display of a catch but only a good-humored kind. Unlike gardening, which follows a rigid routine, fishing is flexible; a man follows his hunches and preferences, the seasons, and the species of fish and their habits. Some fishing is by torchlight, at night. The men do not necessarily leave for the river at the same time,

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usually accompanied by an unmarried daughter, who is both helper and chaperon, a dog, and her breast baby. Her equipment is a machete (in the past it was a digging stick), a portage basket, and a tray upon which she rests her baby.

With the machete she cuts the long root at the base of a mature manioc plant and then loosens the earth so as to pull out the cluster of tubers. Each root yields an average of six tubers, two of which are large, two medium, and two small. This phase of the work is difficult but the woman moves quickly and silently. She does not sing at her [461] work. Her daughter, assistant and apprentice, tears each tuber from the root, scrapes it clear of earth, and drops it in the basket. When a basket has been filled the woman gathers up the stems of the manioc plant, trims them of their leaves, and stacks the cuttings neatly in small heaps. She burns the leaves to add ash to the soil. She does not replant the cuttings immediately, but allows them to lie for several days. After an accumulation a woman devotes a morning to replanting. She breaks up the soil of the segment she has harvested and forms it into small mounds, into each of which she puts a number of trimmed cuttings, setting them in at a sharp angle. She works segments of garden that are about 25 yards square. After replanting, the earliest harvest will be after half a year, but full maturity takes two years. Each 25-square-yard segment yields from 50 to 60 pounds of manioc, or one basket load.

Among the *Bahúkiwa*, for whom I have productivity figures, the 244 household of the headman harvested 400 baskets of manioc annually. 433 Another household that had three adult women harvested 500. One old woman had a minimum yield of 150 and all other households averaged close to 200. Ten households produced 2,550 baskets, or some 75 tons of manioc a year. A basket of manioc converts into two large manioc cakes. In the headman's household of seven people three cakes were eaten every two days, leaving a "surplus" of close to 30 per cent for use as chicha and as farinha. On the other hand, households producing 200 baskets annually are close to the subsistence line.

The point of this digression into production figures has been to 244 show how exigent are the demands upon the woman's labor. The 433 women feel that they cannot afford to interrupt their labors or they 461 will fall behind. Nevertheless, childbirth, illness, ceremonies – women do not garden on the day of a ceremony – and the press of other 462 activities such as accompanying men on prolonged trips for hunting (in the nature of a respite for a woman) take their toll of labor time. Women do not complain of having too much to do. On the contrary, I have heard the grievance that the manioc garden is too small.

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244 A woman is proud of two aspects of her work in gardening: total
433 productivity and the quality of her manioc cake. Productivity reflects
[462] favorably upon her own efforts and, even more important, upon the efforts of her husband, who makes the clearing. The quality of manioc cake depends upon the quality of the tubers and upon the variety of manioc cultivated. Women are knowledgeable about manioc. They
244 are familiar with many varieties, their food qualities as well as their
242 characteristics of growth. They are experimental as well. When wom-
[571] en from different communities meet, they talk about manioc farming, exchange information, and very often exchange cuttings. Thus, a garden includes five or six varieties of manioc. The *Bahúkiwa* cul-
[439] tivated eight varieties, one of which, a yellow variety, they had obtained from Indians on the Amazon below Manaos. Like any good farmer, a woman in the course of time eliminates poor strains for
[252] better ones. Many women have personal recipes for a manioc cake
244 blended from several varieties of tuber. Gardening, being a woman's
462 domain, is a totally secular activity. If crops grow poorly the women

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Fig. 3. Preparing manioc.

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providing drinking parties. While prestige is not a negligible factor in motivating production it is secondary to subsistence needs.

Compared to manioc, all other subsistence horticulture is of trifling significance. The list of Cubeo cultivations besides manioc is a lengthy one, but except for the pupunha palm there is nothing on it that adds bulk to the diet. Crops cultivated by the Cubeo include bitter manioc (*kerika*), yam (*nydmu*), sweet potato (*yapika*), maize (*kardiye*), and tabena (*mwa*), as well as the following unidentified tubers: *kwaiwdryo, walwari, mod, pudjd, kanéka,* and *kabéka.* In addition there are sugar cane (*kaudmene*), pineapple, (*ihilbo*), banana (*djwéye*), plantain (*one*), pupunha (*une*), gourd (*horébe*), calabash (*hahdmu*), coca (*patú*), tobacco (*butci*), and capsicum (*bya*). The pupunha palm is important only as an ingredient in chicha. Gourds serve as vessels, and yams, sweet potatoes, sweet manioc, and maize barely supplement the diet. Sugar cane has become a most important ingredient to chicha, and every community grows several varieties of melons. Most of the starchy tubers the Cubeo grow are used to lend variety to chicha, not to the solid diet.

The Cubeo, as I have already observed, have a very strong feeling for domestication. This covers plant as well as animal life. They are eager to plant anything that comes recommended and to follow the advice of experts. Some have planted coffee shrubs, although no one drinks coffee and they have no other use for the bean. One man built an immense box on stilts which he filled with earth so that he could plant onions safe from pests. Neither he nor anyone else in his community cared for onions. Sugar cane, as already noted, is mainly a male cultivation, but all other food products except for manioc may be grown equally by either men or women. No plant is neglected and the busiest woman seems to have time to look after her plantings, which may be scattered all over the secondary clearing or inner plaza. The produce of these scattered plantings, a melon or two, a handful of sweet potatoes, are often given as gifts from one household to another. Children, too, have their plantings.

Finally, every household has chickens, descended from stock brought in by white settlers. Chickens belong to women, mainly, I believe, because that is what the Colombians and Brazilians thought was proper. Although the Indians take good care of the chickens they do not ordinarily eat them, regarding them either as pets or trading them to the occasional white man who comes by. In some communities, chickens roost in nearby trees – others provide roosting places in the maloca. A few communities rear ducks in the same manner,

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## THE ECONOMIC SYSTEM

The Cubeo economy may be characterized as essentially inelastic, sustenance-oriented, and egalitarian. In these respects it contrasts with parallel root horticulture economies in other parts of the world, such as in Oceania and Africa. In those areas economies are generally in the service of social status and of political power and are, consequently, dynamic, fostering social and economic inequality. Among the Cubeo, on the other hand, and in the South American tropical forest as a whole, social status is a minor issue in production, while the headman, who in Oceania and in Africa plays a commanding role in economic distribution, has here only the most diffuse economic functions.

The relative inelasticity of an economy is, needless to say, a function of many factors. In the case of tropical forest horticulture, the nature of crops, soils, methods of cultivation, and tools are all relevant. Even more significant, however, are such factors as the social organization of production, including such fundamental matters as the division of labor, as well as the nature of political controls. The motives of production are of greatest importance. Motives of status and of political power provide, all other factors being equal, for an expanding economy. When the aim of production is mainly to provide sustenance and to maintain a limited network of lateral (as opposed to hierarchical) exchanges the economy tends to remain in equilibrium with its customary standards of community size. Such an economy is conservative and traditionalistic.

With respect to physical factors, Cubeo manioc horticulture has come close to reaching a productive limit in terms of yield per acre. The yield from *Manihot utilissima* normally ranges from six to ten tons per acre. Among the *Bahúkiwa* I estimated the acreage yield to be between five and six tons, a productivity that reflects considerable agronomical skill and effort. Any substantial increase in aggregate production would have to come more from expanded acreage, for which the land is available, than from more intensive cultivation of present plots. Acreage expansion, however, is limited by a combination of social and cultural conditions as well as by the peculiar nature of bitter manioc itself. As is well known, the ease of cultivation of bitter manioc and its relatively high yield is offset by the great effort required to rid the tubers of hydrocyanic acid. I have already described the processing of manioc from raw tuber to a cake and its heavy demands on the time of the women. Bitter manioc is a cumbersome crop and the load of 50–60 pounds that a woman carries home from the garden represents her carrying capacity.

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home from the garden represents her carrying capacity. These are the technical problems. They are not inherently formidable, except in terms of the traditional sexual division of labor of the Cubeo. The men who make the original clearing can call upon group labor and they have the spare time. If increase in manioc cultivation were only a matter of preparing a clearing it would be relatively easy for any community to double its present zone of planting. The Cubeo, however, must calculate the size of a clearing in accordance with how much land the women of a household, working independently, can cultivate. On her part, the woman does not cultivate more than she can handle in the course of her accustomed routine. In manioc cultivation each household is autonomous; and while a woman can call upon the help of another woman when she is not well there is simply no collective or cooperative organization to help harvest, bring in, and process the crop. The headman who has the authority to direct the masculine work party that prepares the clearing has no jurisdiction over the work of the women. And neither does anyone else.

Nor does the nature of demand place much pressure upon manioc production. Under ideal conditions at least two-thirds of the manioc crop is for food. The rest is divided between chicha and farinha. Since the Cubeo are moderate eaters and do not have the custom of feasting outsiders, the demand for manioc as food is inelastic. There is only a little more elasticity in the demand for chicha. Although the drinking party is a principal means for binding the sibs it cannot be said that increasing the quantity of chicha consumed at a party or adding to the traditional number of parties would promote additional sib cohesiveness. In this instance a law of diminishing returns may be said to operate.[2] In any case, since each sib assumes some of the responsibility for entertaining the others, the burden of supplying the chicha is phratry-wide. The poorer sibs entertain less often than do the richer ones.

It is in the production of farinha that some elasticity in demand may be expected. Farinha, as the Cubeo equivalent of a "cash crop," pays largely for vanity articles, ornaments that have no traditional sanction, but also for cloth petticoats, that have now become customary apparel. However, this aspect of production for the market is also socialized. The goods a woman acquires from the sale of her farinha are largely committed to the intricate network of gift exchanges that apply between husband and wife, brother and sister, and between ceremonial friends of opposite sex. In a general way

[2] See the chapter on the drinking party.

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the production of farinha by women is a partial counterpart to the work of the men in the rubber forest. The man takes most of his earnings in "capital goods," muzzle-loading guns, machetes, fishhooks, matches, knives, thread, needles, ammunition. The remainder goes to a few vanity items for himself and in gifts for his wife, sister, and female ceremonial friend. It is these gifts that a woman is obligated to reciprocate through her farinha trade. Since these gift exchanges involve traditional relations of status equality they quickly achieve a relatively stable equilibrium. Only a small part, then, of commercial exchange leaves the traditional channels of lateral circulation of goods. As for "vanity" purchases, they form no part of any institutionalized expression of social prestige. The issue for the Cubeo is rather one of a limited degree of self-indulgence. For a woman, in particular, the privilege of indulging a fancy for some trinket and freely contracting her farinha for it is an essential part of her sense of domestic well-being. It is an expression, on the one hand, of her autonomy, and, on the other, of domestic felicity. A dissatisfied wife does not indulge her personal vanity more; on the contrary, she produces less.

Another important element in production is the attitude toward labor. For the Cubeo all effort must be inherently satisfying. Women accept more drudgery than do men, but they no more than the men would accept the bitter peasant philosophy that hard and unrewarding work is man's lot. Men and women alike are accustomed to a variety of effort. They do not care to drive themselves beyond the onset of boredom or of fatigue. All work patterns are based upon short and diversified rhythms. I have demonstrated this in the work cycle of women. It is even more marked in the work cycle of men. Food gathering and preparing does demand continuity and completion. The hunter must complete his chase, the fisherman must return home with a suitable catch, and the housewife must complete her daily ration of manioc cake. Even so, there are many opportunities for rest and diversion that the Indians take. They would rather eat less than work more. In the course of a year there are many holidays. Among the *Bahúkiwa* these averaged almost one a week. On the occasion of a drinking party women do not go into the fields either on the day of preparation or on the day after. In manufactures, which form part of the domestic economy, the pace of work is very slow. Men, who make the baskets that are important home utensils as well as major items in trade, work very sporadically. There is no compulsion to finish something quickly. Thus, on the whole, the Cubeo work habits also contribute to general economic inelasticity.

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There is no formal provision in Cubeo economy whereby foodstuffs, utensils, or productive equipment can accumulate disproportionately in any one household or in any one community. There are well-to-do communities and there are poor communities, the differences between them being due, however, almost entirely to their own state of morale, but also to differences in location. Location, as has been noted, follows the formal but functionally inconsequential ranking of the sibs. Upriver sibs may have some disadvantages in fishing during the dry season. On the other hand, they have advantages in hunting. Tapir, for example, are more numerous upriver on the Cuduiarí than downriver. Moreover, occupants of a river do have the privilege of fishing anywhere along its length. In this respect, the most important point to emphasize is that the Cubeo acknowledge the right of all who are not enemies to the available food resources. The economic domain of the tribes in the Vaupés area is, in fact, an extensive one. The sib territory is of course the economic center, but there is also available a vast periphery of supplementary economic zones. On the score of friendship and of bilateral kinship men acquire hunting and fishing rights in many different rivers. Thus, in his travels Koch-Grünberg met sections of tribes, including Cubeo, very far from their home base. The hospitality of the house is proverbial in this region and such domestic hospitality has its counterpart in a hospitality of the river or of the forest. It is the privilege of families to travel about, visiting community after community where they have either a kinship claim or a friendship claim. Everywhere the men are welcome as fishermen and as hunters and the women are assigned gardens. So long as visitors join the economic round they are welcome. It is even more accurate to say that they are eagerly welcomed, for nothing contributes more to the state of contentment of a community than the desire of others to join it. The issue, of course, is economic hospitality and not freedom of trespass. The right of trespass is the right to enter and to use an economic domain without taking formal cognizance of those who have a stronger or more traditional right to it. Such rights among the Cubeo are nonexistent. The rights of hospitality, on the other hand, obligate those who have entered a nontraditional economic domain to engage in the traditional forms of reciprocity that bind sibmen and phratry mates. When hunters kill a tapir in the domain of another sib they are not obligated to "pay tribute" but they do have a sense of obligation to give some of the meat to the host sib as part of a pattern of food reciprocity.

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Underlying this relatively unrestricted access to food resources are two cultural conditions. One is that food for the Cubeo symbol-

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ives the amity of the highly knit sib community; the other, and a related condition, is that the total economic product is diverted from considerations of status and power. Thus, the Cubeo cannot think of economic advantage as a political advantage over others, and, conversely, they cannot regard the economic advantage of others as a threat to their own autonomy. Economic equalization through the various formal channels of distribution is taken for granted. There are no sanctions or techniques deliberately designed to promote equality, but simply provision of sustenance for all persons within the network of kinship and friendship.

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## *Leadership and Authority*

Leadership among the Cubeo follows a principle that tends to understate authority. This principle asserts that leadership derives from giving more than one receives. Authoritarian relationships, by contrast, follow an opposing principle, that of receiving more than one gives. Authority, to be sure, can be established on a personal basis of personality and prowess. However, societies that have developed strong authority systems have usually done so by economic means, by inequality in the flow of goods. An authority system based on unequal flow of goods upward, from the community to a chief, is likely to respond quickly to economic development, and at the same time to foster economic growth. The Cubeo theory effectively minimizes the economic impact of leadership. The principle of greater flow to the top creates the condition for an expanding economic-political system, whereas the principle of greater flow from the top down creates the conditions for a static political-economic system. The economic role of the Cubeo headman is confined largely to stimulating the production of chicha. In short, the Cubeo headman gives all of his effort and ability to the community. The community, for its part, has no obligation to give anything to him. Since he has no authority to command economic productivity, for he is not an economic redistributor, he is devoid of significant economic function. At the same time the headman is a secular figure; he has no greater magical or religious powers than any other and so he is lacking in sacred authority. He may be a war leader, but he need not be; and even when he is a war leader, it is a very small party that he commands. Thus,

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622 571 433 the Cubeo headman is lacking in precisely those attributes that in other parts of the world have traditionally played a prominent part in political evolution.

622 554 The two terms, *habókü* and *kendmi upákü*, meaning, respectively, a man of substance and "owner of the house," illustrate the conceptual range in Cubeo leadership. The *habókü* is the leader, whose presence, enhanced by a muscular physique, commands respect, who has undisputed skill in hunting, in fishing, in crafts, and who commands ceremonial lore. He possesses the full range of ceremonial regalia, feather headdresses, necklaces, and girdles. His equipment is of the best quality and in excellent condition. The *kendmi upákü*, on the other hand, is simply the head of the maloca. The *habókü* is apt to be head of the house, but a house head need not be *habókü*, although as a leader he will possess some *habókü* attributes. Thus [592] 622 not all headmen qualify as *habókü*. Those of higher-ranking sibs, 614 such as the *Órabawa*, *Aúnbwawü*, and *Hehénewa*, usually do, and 554 those of lower-ranking sibs, such as the *Bahúkiwa*, usually do not. The existence of a concept of *habókü* is a spur to the ambition of a headman, although the status is honorific only. The *habókü* commands respect everywhere in the tribe, but his authority, such as it is, is limited to his own sib. Sibmen share in the prestige of having a *habókü* as headman. Not every *habókü* is the head of his sib, for in some sibs several men hold the title and their senior is then the head- [709] man. In time of war the *habókü* is the natural war leader. Even when not headman his leadership is drawn upon in hunting and in all collective activities.

622 614 554 301 292 In the higher-ranking sibs the insignia of *habókü* include, first, a quartz cylinder worn as a pendant, a jaguar-tooth girdle, an armadillo-vertebrae girdle, and, finally, *mápena*, the ceremonial headdress of feathers and monkey hair. The *Bahúkiwa*, who are not privileged to wear either the quartz pendant or the girdles, maintain that *mápena* are the principal insignia of *habókü* status among them, although they defer to the higher status of the insignia of their higher-ranking clans. The *Hehénewa* deride this *Bahúkiwa* claim and insist that without the pendant and girdles no man can call himself *habókü*. The *Bakúkiwa* define *habókü* as an achieved status and the *Hehénewa* as a hereditary status, but only in the sense that it pertains to high-ranking sibs. Within the proper sib any man may acquire the insignia and the status of *habókü*.[1]

[114] [565] [1] Apropos of social status, Martius (1867, I, 396) reported caste distinctions of chiefs, nobles, and commoners on the Vaupés. He gives no details. One suspects an exaggeration, although the bases for his view are understandable.

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these conditions is relevant to an understanding of Cubeo culture. 121
But even taken together they do not account for the principal pat- 174
terns of Cubeo culture, which have a natural history of their own.
The question, however, is not whether cultural patterns have a
natural history, but only whether the ecological and the techno-
logical theories are adequate accounts of the natural history of a cul-
ture.

## ADAPTATION

Thus, the problem of cultural adaptation to an environment can- 182
not be dealt with simply and one-sidedly by describing the hypothet- 121
ical shaping of a culture to the environment. Adaptation is a study
of interaction. Generally speaking, highly specialized environments
demand highly specialized and hence relatively predictable cultural
responses. The tropical forest is not an example of a highly special-
ized economic environment judged empirically by the diversity of
cultural patterns it has sustained. Bitter manioc is clearly a cumber- 182
some crop, its high yield and relative ease of cultivation being offset 241
by its very heavy demands on labor, specifically on that of women. 121
It can be argued, therefore, that this crop offers a poor economic
base for social and political development. Yet the Northwest Ama-
zon also is familiar with maize, yams, and sweet manioc, not to men-
tion beans and squash and gourd. These crops have traditionally
sustained high cultures. Can we explain in ecological terms why
the Northwest Amazon tribes chose to specialize in bitter manioc
rather than maize and beans, as did, for example, the lowland Maya?
It would seem that here is a case of cultural choice in which prefer- 121
ences for quick yield, minimum care in cultivation, strong sexual divi- 181
sion of labor, and perennial harvest rather than the problems of 182
storage and seasonal periodicity may have been compelling factors. 433
Since the Cubeo social system placed no great demands upon an ex- (241)
panding economic productivity the "easy" adaptation to nature was
always feasible. The main patterns of Cubeo life do not stress the
disciplines of prolonged and closely managed effort. The habitual (461)
rhythms of masculine labor are discontinuous and varied. Leader-
ship is based on the principle of mood regulation rather than on dedi-
cation to an ideal or submission to authority. High cultures are based
on strongly disciplined and collective ways of life. By contrast, the
Cubeo values greater emotional spontaneity and personal autonomy.
An economy, needless to say, will in the end transform cultural values
as well as the personal character of the members of a culture. Before

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it can do so, however, it must be given a chance, so to speak, by the culture. There is nothing in physical nature that dictates the form of an economy beyond the requirement that it satisfy subsistence needs. In the case of the Cubeo the simplicity of the economy, and the corresponding simplicity of the culture as a whole, would seem to be far more a product of its fundamental patterns and principles of organization than of an external nature. If this conclusion is correct, it would suggest that the simple horticultural societies, as a type, are not mere victims of inhospitable environments but rather that they constitute a range of cultural systems with characteristic modes of equilibrium and adaptation that do not readily foster economic expansion and higher levels of social and political integration. This statement leads to one other conclusion, namely, that a culture is only partly a functional system adapted to the satisfaction of basic needs. With respect to these satisfactions, most societies have surplus capacity, a great deal of room for maneuver and for improvisation. Much of the form of a culture represents a style of life that need not, indeed cannot, be explained simply in terms of function, equilibrium, or adaptation. A style of life then must be studied in its own terms since it too is part of the diversity of nature.